

# Chapter 1

## **Forestwide Goals and Objectives**



Cover photo: Piney River viewed from Cabbagehead  
Photographer: Gary Schmidgal, Retired Forest Service

## Chapter 1

# Forestwide Goals and Objectives

### Introduction

A goal is a concise statement that describes a desired condition to be achieved sometime in the future. Goals can be developed for the Forest as a whole or for specific management prescriptions. They are broad and general in scope with no specific timeframe. Forest Plan goals link broad agency goals as set forth in law, executive orders, regulations, agency directives, and the Resources Planning Act (RPA) program. Achievement of goals is not mandatory, and there is no established timeframe for accomplishment.

Objectives are more specific and concrete than goals. An objective is a concise, time-specific statement of measurable planned results needed to achieve Forest Plan goals. The key words are measurable and time-specific: attainment can be measured, monitored and evaluated. Objectives can be developed either forest-wide or for specific management prescriptions. Objectives describe:

- (1) Desired resource conditions within the planning area for the next decade (or longer); and
- (2) Desired amounts of goods and services that the planning area is capable of producing within the next decade.

The law requires compliance with all management direction. Some goals, however, are not achievable during the life of the Forest Plan, which is generally 10 to 15 years. While objectives are designed to be achievable during the plan period, factors such as lack of funding, unexpected natural events, or even drastic changes in National policy may preclude the Forest from meeting any give objective.

The Forest complies with the goals and objectives by using them as the basis for project-level planning. Site-specific, on-the-ground projects move the Forest towards achievement of the multiple-use and resource-management goals and objectives described in this chapter and in the individual management prescriptions. The goals and objectives are the foundation on which the purpose and need for site-specific projects is built.

### Goal 1 – Promote Ecosystem Health and Sustainability

#### Goal 1.1 – Terrestrial Natural Communities

Maintain, enhance, or restore site-appropriate natural communities, including the full range of vegetation composition and structural conditions.

##### Objective 1.1a

Within Management Prescription 1.1 areas, apply management activities to move natural communities towards restoration in the amounts shown in Table 1-1. (See Appendix A for a description of the characteristics of natural communities).

Percentages are applied to the total amount of National Forest System lands within the respective ecological subsection. (See Appendix D of FEIS for more information on subsections)

**Table 1-1. Desired percentage of NFS lands treated to restore natural community types in Management Prescription 1.1 areas.**

Subsection	Natural Community Types (NCT)					
	Savanna	Open woodland	Closed Woodland	Upland Forest	Ozark Fen	Glade
Current River Hills	0-1%	6-7%	9-10%	0-4%	683 ac (9 areas)	13 ac
Meramec River Hills	0-1%	3-4%	5-6%	0-2%	0	5 ac
Black River Ozark Border	1-18%	13-26%	10-20%	0-3%	0	<1ac
Central Plateau	1-8%	3-4%	14-19%	0-6%	0	7 ac
White River Hills	4%	15-17%	11-12%	0-6%	0	15-17%
St. Francis Knobs and Basins	0-2%	13-17%	15-20%	0-16%	0	140 ac
Gasconade River Hills	3-5%	9-17%	4-8%	0-1%	15 ac (1 area)	10 ac
Claypan Till Plains	0-1%	0-1%	7-25%	0-30%	0	<1 ac

*Prairie natural community types are less than 1% for all subsections.*

### Objective 1.1b

Within Management Prescription 1.2 areas, apply management activities to move natural communities towards restoration in the amounts shown in Table 1-2. (See Appendix A for a description of the characteristics of natural communities).

Percentages are applied to the total amount of National Forest System lands within the respective ecological subsection. (See Appendix D of FEIS for more information on subsections)

**Table 1-2. Desired percentage of NFS lands treated to restore natural community types in Management Prescription 1.2 areas.**

Subsection	Natural Community Types (NCT)					
	Savanna	Open woodland	Closed Woodland	Upland Forest	Ozark Fen	Glade
Meramec River Hills	0-4%	4-6%	3-5%	0-1%	0	5 ac
Central Plateau	0-1%	0-1%	3-7%	0-28%	0	5 ac
White River Hills	4-5%	19-21%	14-15%	6-7%	0	19-21%
St. Francis Knobs and Basins	0%	5-6%	9-11%	11-15%	0	100 ac
Gasconade River Hills	3-5%	4-8%	1-3%	0-1%	191 ac (1 areas)	9 ac

*Prairie natural community types are less than 1% for all subsections.*

### Goal 1.2 – Non-Native Invasive Species

Maintain desired ecosystems throughout the forest with few occurrences of non-native invasive species.

Prevent new invasions and control or reduce existing occurrences of non-native invasive species.

**Objective 1.2a**

Control a minimum of 2,000 acres of existing noxious or non-native invasive species over the plan period.

**Goal 1.3 – Soils, Watersheds, and Water Quality**

Minimize erosion and compaction.

Restore and maintain soil productivity and nutrient retention capacity.

Protect the water quality and integrity of the watershed on Forest lands.

Maintain healthy, sustainable, and diverse natural communities.

Prevent wetland degradation and loss, and restore and enhance wetlands when possible.

Establish and maintain riparian management and watercourse protection zones to:

- Maintain, restore, and enhance the inherent ecological processes and functions of the associated aquatic, riparian, and upland components within the riparian corridor.
- Maintain streams in normal function within natural ranges of flow, sediment movement, temperature, and other variables.
- Restore or maintain impaired waters as classified by the section 303 (d) of the Federal Clean Water Act.
- Protect and improve state and national outstanding resource waters.

**Objective 1.3a**

Stabilize ten miles or more of stream reaches.

**Objective 1.3b**

Restore or enhance 125 acres of bottomland hardwood forest.

**Objective 1.3c**

Increase loading in 3 miles or more in a stream or river to 100 to 300 pieces of large woody material (LWM) per stream mile.

**Objective 1.3d**

Protect and improve 900 acres of wetlands.

**Goal 1.4 – Wildlife and Aquatic Habitat**

Provide the range of natural habitats necessary to support populations of existing native plant and animal species.

Restore and manage natural communities as the primary means of providing quality terrestrial, karst, and aquatic wildlife and rare plant habitat.

Support recovery of Federal and State listed species, protection and management of habitat for regionally listed species, and protection and management of habitat for other identified species of concern.

Provide specialized habitats that are a healthy, functioning part of the larger landscape and require no special protection or additional management considerations. Provide specialized

habitat components (such as standing dead trees, cavity and den trees, downed woody material, temporary pools, ephemeral springs and seeps) across the landscape in amounts and types commensurate with the natural communities in which they occur.

Encourage habitat that responds to demand for both consumptive and non-consumptive fish and wildlife use.

Maintain native and desired non-native fish populations through habitat protection and enhancement and stocking programs.

#### **Objective 1.4a**

Improve open woodland conditions on at least 10,500 acres to provide habitat for summer tanager, northern bobwhite, Bachman's sparrow, and eastern red bat.

#### **Objective 1.4b**

Increase the proportion of managed native grasslands to that of exotic cool season grasses from the current 46% native grass to 55% native grass to provide habitat for northern bobwhite.

#### **Objective 1.4c**

Maintain forest, closed woodland or open woodland cover over 85% or greater of Mark Twain National Forest acres to provide habitat for worm-eating warbler.

#### **Objective 1.4d**

Treat at least 4,000 acres of glades to reduce woody vegetation to provide habitat for Bachman's sparrow.

#### **Objective 1.4e**

Designate permanent old growth on 8% to 12% of each 2.1 and 6.2 management area, and on 15% - 20% of each 6.1 management area.

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## **Goal 2 – Provide a Variety of Uses, Values, Products, and Services**

### **Goal 2.1 – Public Values**

Within the capability of sustainable ecosystems, offer multiple benefits that contribute to the social and economic well-being of local and regional communities by providing a variety of uses, values, products, and services in a cost effective manner for present and future generations.

Provide accessibility of the full range of uses, values, products, and services to members of underserved and low-income populations.

### **Goal 2.2 – Prescribed Fire, Fuels, and Wildland Fire Management**

Re-establish the role of fire in the natural communities of the Ozarks by emulating the historic fire regime.

Restore fire regime condition class two or three lands to condition class one.

Reduce hazardous fuels.

Reduce wildland fire risk to communities.

Manage prescribed fires so that emissions do not hinder the State's progress toward attaining air quality standards and visibility goals.

Provide well-planned and executed fire protection and fire-use programs that are responsive to values at risk and management area objectives.

### Objective 2.2a

In addition to the traditional late-winter through early-spring burn season, facilitate restoration treatments then emulate range of natural variability for historical fire regimes in glades, savannas, and pine woodlands by:

- Prescribe burning up to 20% of total projected burn acres from May through September, and
- Prescribe burning up to 40% of total projected burn acres from September through December.

### Objective 2.2b

Use prescribed fire to reduce hazardous fuels and improve Fire Regime Condition Class on 45,000 acres or more per year.

### Objective 2.2c

Treat those fuels that pose moderate to high risk to communities or community infrastructure, and threatened and endangered species.

### Objective 2.2d

Develop a suppression strategy to respond to communities or community infrastructures and threatened and endangered species that are at high risk.

### Objective 2.2e

Develop fire management units and wildland fire implementation plans for wildland fire use.

## Goal 2.3 – Transportation System

Develop and maintain a transportation system which provides the minimum permanent road access needed to meet resource management objectives.

Provide temporary road access that complements the permanent road system for effective resource management.

Provide off-road vehicle use in a way that minimizes impacts to other resources.

Decommission unneeded roads.

## Goal 2.4 – Timber Management

Use timber management, where appropriate, to restore or enhance degraded natural communities, sustain healthy and productive forests, and reduce hazardous fuels to reach the desired condition of the forest.

Respond to disturbance events (storms, wildfires, disease, or insect attacks, etc) in a timely manner. Salvage damaged forest resources when compatible with management prescriptions.

Provide timber and wood products to help support sustainable local industry and economic interests.

### **Goal 2.5 – Geology and Minerals Management**

Provide for mineral prospecting and mineral development while complementing other resource management objectives.

### **Goal 2.6 – Land Adjustment Program**

Consolidate National Forest System lands to improve effectiveness of management and enhance public benefits.

Emphasize disposal of isolated tracts of National Forest System lands.

Provide public access to National Forest System lands to allow the public to engage in a variety of uses, values, products, and services.

#### **Objective 2.6**

Acquire lands, or interests in lands, needed to support specific resource management objectives or to consolidate National Forest System ownership patterns.

Acquire right-of-ways or fee simple title in lands, as appropriate, to meet access needs.

### **Goal 2.7 – Range Management**

Within the capability of sustainable ecosystems, provide range forage on open lands in response to demand.

Encourage the restoration, establishment, and management of native grass communities on ecologically appropriate sites.

Restore and sustain the distribution and quality of native vegetation in range management units by increasing species diversity and eliminating the spread of non-native invasive species.

Manage cool season pastures to provide quality forage that includes a variety of cool season grasses and forbs.

### **Goal 2.8 – Recreation Opportunities**

Provide a diversity of recreational opportunities and benefits through a variety of settings.

Contribute to local, regional, and national economies by providing recreational opportunities in a socially and environmentally acceptable manner.

### **Goal 2.9 – Visual Management**

Maintain or enhance the quality of scenic resources to provide desired landscape character.

### **Goal 2.10 – Heritage Resources**

Support preservation of the cultural heritage of Missouri by identifying, protecting, managing, and interpreting heritage sites on the Forest.



**Objective 2.10a**

Plan for completion of the Forest heritage resource inventory and evaluations of heritage resources according to provisions set forth in Section 110 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended (NHPA).

**Objective 2.10b**

Complete formal determinations of eligibility for evaluated sites.

**Goal 2.11 – Wilderness Opportunities**

Implement the Wilderness Opportunity Spectrum (WOS) as the primary system for characterizing, locating, and managing the Wilderness resource.

Establish management policies that ensure protection of the Wilderness resource while complementing user objectives.

Provide for the use of prescribed fire as a management tool to perpetuate fire dependent ecosystems found within the Hercules Glade Wilderness when approved by the Chief of the Forest Service through a change in, or exception to, the National Wilderness Policy.

